

from Metropolitan State College of Denver. His church, Shorter Community AME, dedicated its community room in his name and on April 26, 2003, the City and County of Denver named the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library in recognition of his lifetime of service to our community. But accolades don't tell the whole story. Omar once made a poignant reference in an article that after 52 years of marriage to Jeweldine, "You can put this in big bold letters—without her I would not be half the person I am and I know that." Not only was Omar Blair a man of accomplishment, he was a man who was well-grounded with a clear sense of what mattered.

Omar Blair was an unrelenting advocate for the causes that elevate the human condition. He burnished a reputation of being forthright, pragmatic, outspoken and "taking on all comers." But ultimately, he was dedicated to our children—all of our children. He constantly reiterated that "the kids are what it's all about" and I believe his legacy to us is to never waver in our commitment to future generations.

Omar Blair lived a life of meaning and one that is rich in consequence. It is the character and deeds of Omar Blair, and all Americans like him, which distinguish us as a people. Truly, we are all diminished by the passing of this remarkable person. Please join me in paying tribute to the life of Omar D. Blair, a distinguished citizen. It is the values, leadership and commitment he exhibited during his life that serves to build a better future for all Americans.

HONORING ROSEMARIE FLORENCE  
FREENEY HARDING

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 2, 2004*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my colleague, LOIS CAPPS, to honor the legacy of Rosemarie Harding, a mother, counselor, social worker, and teacher. On March 1, 2004, Rose departed at the age of 73, surrounded by loved ones who prayed and sang her passage to the other side.

Rosemarie Florence Freney Harding was born July 24, 1930 to Dock Freney, Jr. and Ella Lee Harris Freney. She was the youngest of nine siblings, a sweet and keenly intuitive child who was deeply loved. After graduating from high school, she spent two years at Chicago Teachers College. In 1955, Rose graduated from Goshen College in Indiana with a major in sociology.

After completing her bachelor's degree, Rose returned to Chicago and worked as a social worker and teacher, during which time she served Bethel Mennonite Church as a lay counselor. In 1959 she met Vincent Harding at a church conference. Rosemarie and Vincent married in 1960 and moved to Atlanta, Georgia in 1961 as representatives of the Mennonite Central Committee. There, they opened up their home as the South's first interracial voluntary service center, Mennonite House. This was an important gathering place for Civil Rights activists, who found respite, hospitality, encouragement and stimulating dialogue.

After her children were born, Rosemarie worked as a substitute teacher and helped

found the city's first interracial preschool as well as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community School, one of Atlanta's earliest independent black day schools. She also helped found the Guardians, an advocacy group dedicated to ensuring black parents a voice in the desegregation of Atlanta public schools. In 1974, Rosemarie and her family moved to Philadelphia where she continued her involvement in progressive political activism and helped raise several grandnieces and nephews. In 1978, she earned a masters degree in history and women's studies at Goddard College. Rosemarie also served in various volunteer capacities at the American Friends Service Committee and traveled to Brazil in 1980 to evaluate the organization's support for faith-based social justice initiatives.

From 1979 to 1981 Rosemarie worked at the Pendle Hill Quaker Study, where she and her husband developed a series of courses on spirituality and social justice. When the couple moved to Denver in 1981, Rosemarie continued to co-teach these courses with Vincent at the Iliff School of Theology. Increasingly, the couple traveled throughout the U.S. and internationally, conducting workshops, giving lectures, and sharing insights with educators, activists, religious leaders, and others. After receiving a masters degree in social work, Rosemarie worked for the Family Crisis Center in Denver. She treated colleagues and clients with great respect and often found gentle and creative ways to resolve even the most intransigent conflicts.

As the first member of her family to finish college, Rosemarie was a mentor and example to all of her nieces and nephews; always assisting and encouraging them. She helped with homework, shared her love for writing and reading, and provided opportunities for her younger relatives to travel and broaden their horizons. She was the mediator in the family—the one who, in the midst of tensions or arguments, could calm the storm. She didn't teach by dictate, but by example. She also loved to laugh and dance and was most happy when those around her were also enjoying themselves.

She leaves many to mourn her death and to celebrate her life: Vincent, her husband of 43 years; Rachel, her daughter; Jonathan, her son; her adopted son, Geshe Thupten Kunsang; her sisters Alma Campbell, Mildred Dozier and Sue Verrett; her nieces and nephews Louis, Maxine, Frank, Robert, Lottie, Carmen, Thomas, Francetta, Nataleen, Eileen, Anita, Tommy, Donna, Jimmy, James, Jean, Gloria, Phillip, Rose, JoAnn, Harvey, Walter, Felicia and Claude; and a host of other dearly beloved relatives and friends.

I take great pride in joining Rosemarie's family and colleagues to salute the extraordinary Rosemarie Harding. I want to thank her on behalf of the entire 9th Congressional District for her great heart and generous soul. She has been a friend who has shared her wisdom and has given me support.

STATE CHAMPIONS TIMES THREE

**HON. HOWARD COBLE**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 2, 2004*

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, while the nation focuses on the culmination of the NCAA men's

basketball March Madness and the Final Four this weekend in San Antonio, Texas, the Sixth District of North Carolina is already basking in the glow as the home of three state high school basketball championship teams. Trinity High School in Randolph County, Thomasville High School in Davidson County, and Westchester Academy in Guilford County are the respective homes for high school basketball champions this season, and we are proud to acknowledge their tremendous seasons here.

Trinity High School completed a remarkable season on March 13 at the Dean Smith Center in Chapel Hill when it captured the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) 3-A boys basketball championship with a win over Dudley High School of Greensboro. Led by state Coach of the Year Tim Kelly and state Player of the Year Josh King, the Bulldogs finished the year with a 31-1 record.

Despite that gaudy regular season record, many people did not give Trinity much of a chance going into the game against the Dudley Panthers. Coach Kelly told the Greensboro News & Record that a tough regular season schedule prepared his baby-faced warriors for the toughest battle of the year. "We think we saw the right mix to get here," Coach Kelly told the newspaper. "We didn't get a free pass. We didn't get to pass go and collect \$200. We had to pay our way to get here and our kids were aggressive. We might look like choirboys when we walk into the building, but we're not. We're going to attack and be aggressive on both ends of the floor."

When it was over, the Bulldogs celebrated a 73-64 win over the Panthers, led by King's 21 points, along with 18 from championship game MVP John McEachin. Coach Kelly will tell you, however, that it took a total team effort to beat a talented Dudley squad. "I really feel like this team was destined to win tonight," the coach concluded. "We wish (Dudley) luck next year with everything they have coming back. I'd hate to have to play them next year, but maybe we'll get that opportunity."

So do all the Bulldogs fans, but before we look ahead to next season, let's take one more moment to savor this year's championship. Congratulations are in order to Coach Kelly and his assistants, Joey Freeman, Richard Brendle, Richard Austin, Lindy Hall, Brent McDowell, and Brian Nance. Again, led by Player of the Year King, and MVP McEachin, every member of the Bulldogs can take pride in the title quest. The other members of the championship team included J.B. McDowell, Jason Lewis, Spencer Smith, Jonathan Watts, Tim Kelly, Brian Downing, David Idol, Matt Watkins, Dane Young, Ben King, and Dustin Everett.

Assisting all season long were managers Kristy Craig, Jennifer Hiatt, Carson Wheeler, Jerome Porter, along with statisticians Ashley Gentry and Blair Farlow. To Principal Daryl Barnes, Athletic Director Doug Tuggle, the coaches, players, students, faculty, staff, family, and friends of the Trinity Bulldogs, we say congratulations for capturing the 3-A state boys basketball championship.

Speaking of threes, the girls basketball team at Thomasville High School is celebrating its third straight NCHSAA 1-A state championship. Also known as the Bulldogs, Thomasville defeated Farmville Central 67-48 on March 13 to win the crown at the Smith Center in Chapel Hill. It was the second year in a row that